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ABSTRACT

This self-instructional packet, developed for use in two 50-minute class sessions, is designed to teach students about editorials and editorial writing. Lesson One includes a list of behavioral objectives for the project; a pretest; a discussion of purpose, structure, and types of editorials; and an exercise in writing an editorial based on an attached outline. Lesson Two asks students to write an editorial on a subject of their own choice and provides a posttest. (GW)

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THE EDITORIAL

This packet is desi,ned for individual use by the students

Instructions:

1. Read and complete the pretest.

2. Read through the packet becoming familiar with all the information and then do all the assigned tasks

3. If you do not understand something or need help, raise your hand and the teacher will assist you. However, try to do all of the work individually.

4. Two class sessions of approximately 50 minutes each should be allowed for this project.

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

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17 February 1978

US 203 911

Newswriting

Writing the Editorial

Generalization: Clear concise writing is essential.

Behaviorial Objectives: By studying examples in the text and in supplementary material, the student will be able to:

Recognize that the primary purpose of the editorial is to influence reader opinion and be able to explain how this is done.

Identify the characteristics of a good editorial and apply them to the writing of his own.

State the differences between the eight types of editorials and the purpose of each of the editorials.

Recognize the need for an editorial in a given situation and be able to write one.

Demonstrate an ability to write creatively, especially in the eidtorial form of creative writing.

State the reasons that a newspaper's editorial policy is essential to its well-being.

Reference text: Mulligan, John and D'Amelio, Dan, Experiences in Journalism, Lyons and Carnahan Co., Chicago, 1966.

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Newswriting

Writing the Editorial

Pre-test: Take this pre-test without reference to your text or the following material in this unit. The purpose of this test is to provide an approximation of your knowledge of the editorial.

Choose the answer which is most correct and put the letter of that answer in the blank provided.

____ 1. Which of the following is the personal voice of the newspaper?

A. the editor
B. the reporter
C. the editorial
D. the news section

____ 2. The primary purpose of the editorial is to

A. insult
B. influence reader opinion
C. criticize the government
D. express the opinions of the newspaper owner

____ 3. Editorial policy is set by

A. the editorial writer
B. top level government officials
C. render opinion
D. top level newspaper officials

____ 4. The qualities of a good editorial are

A. interest, brevity, force
B. interest, brevity, idealism
C. idealism, interest, objectivity
C. idealism, directions, interest

____ 5. Which of the following is not a type of editorial?

A. editorial of information
B. editorial of lecture
C. editorial of reform
D. editorial cartoons

____ 6. How do you determine the editorial policy of a newspaper?

A. It is printed in all papers in a statement of policy on the editorial page.
B. You must decide for yourself by reading the newspaper's editorials.
C. A poll of the editorial writers of the newspaper must be taken.
D. Ask the editor.

True or False

____ 7. Editorials are the only way a newspaper has of revealing its policies.

____ 8. You cannot be objective in an editorial.

____ 9. Editorials usually deal with more than one idea.

____10. Editorial writing is vastly different from other forms of newspaper writing.

____11. The editorial writer for the school newspaper should think and write in terms of his own school.

____12. A longer editorial is just as appealing as a short one.

____13. The "preaching" type of editorial is most effective.

____14. No editorial is ever intended to amuse.

____15. Students who write editorials should be leaders of thought.

____16. A word that would apply to an editorial is "contemporary.

The answers to this quiz are on the back of this page. This test is for your own benefit, so be fair to yourself and don't peek until you are finished with the test.

Newswriting

Writing the Editorial--Part I

Introduction to the editorial: What is an editorial?

The editorial is the voice of the newspaper. It is the paper's means of discussing the significance of the news. It is the interpretive and influential arm of the paper - the means by which it makes its position clear and attempts to influence its readers. The editorial speaks not for individuals, but for the newspaper itself. Its most important purpose is to influence readers opinion. The editorial policy of the newspaper is the newspaper's life, because it determines the popularity of the paper and thereby its readership. This policy is decided upon by the top level newspaper officials.

General structure of the editorial:

Although there are many types of editorials, there are some general characteristics which apply to all editorials. These are:

1. The subject of the editorial must be interesting and the writing clear and brief.
2. The reasoning must be sound, with every point supporting and leading logically to the conclusion.
3. The writer must be content to put only one idea across: in so doing he must move directly into the task without unnecessary words, presenting facts in support of his thesis rather than preaching to the reader
3. The editorial writer must remain objective.

Newswriting

Editorial Cont'd

Introduction to the eight types of editorials:

The primary purpose of the editorial is to influence reader opinion, but there are many ways this can be done. One way is by writing an:

1. Editorial of interpretation - Explanation and information are the ingredients of this type of editorial. The subject is usually so significant that the editor wants the reader to understand the situation.
2. Editorial of information - This one limits itself to the review of certain facts. The mere handling of them in this manner emphasizes their importance and clears up misunderstandings. It differs from the editorial of interpretation in that it doesn't draw conclusions so obviously.
3. Editorial of Criticism and Reform - This editorial takes a definite stand and attempts to convince the reader. Although some are limited to influencing the reader's thinking, many call for definite action on the reader's part. In this criticism, conversations with the school paper advisor to determine how far the writer of the editorial should go are necessary.
4. Editorial of Tribute - This editorial lauds somebody for worthy action, expresses appreciation for something or acts as a tribute to the deceased.

Newswriting

Editorial Cont'd

5. Editorial of Entertainment - Written in a light vain, this editorial has as its purpose the entertainment of the reader. Student editors are so busy working for the betterment of the school that they do not often taki enough time ou to laugh of chuckle in the editorial column.

6. Editorial of Special Occasions - Thanksgiving, Christmas, Washington's birthday, the annual United Fund Drive, and dozens of other significant occasions lend themselves to editorial treatment. In spite of the interpretive nature of many of these pieces, they are generally considered a type unto themselves.

7. Editorial Liners - A liner is a short statement on a general or a specific subject, either serious or light, which depends upon cleverness or punch to make up for its brevity. These liners are dropped in at the end of editorial columns. Sometimes they are not original but are the sayings of great men. They serve to add emphasis to the subject dealt with in the editorial they follow.

8. Editorial Cartoons - Growing in popularity in school newspapers is this form of editorializing. It requires a talented student, not only for the art work, but also for the thought involved.

Newswriting

Editorial Cont'd

Summary: Today you have read about the editorial, its purpose, its general structure, and the various types of editorials. Keeping these facts in mind, choose a topic from the ones listed below, prepare an outline for an editorial as shown on the attached sheet.

What is a real holiday?

Lack of manners at assemblies.

The school prepares you for life.

Cheating on tests.

Fighting pollution.

An outstanding teacher.

Student smoking or Drug use.

Student participation in Student Council activities.

Another topic which you feel is contemporary and pertains to the school (subject to advisor approval)

A Sample Outline for an Editorial

The subject: The school newspaper has started a drive to raise funds to pave the student parking lot. It needs the support of all organizations and individual students.

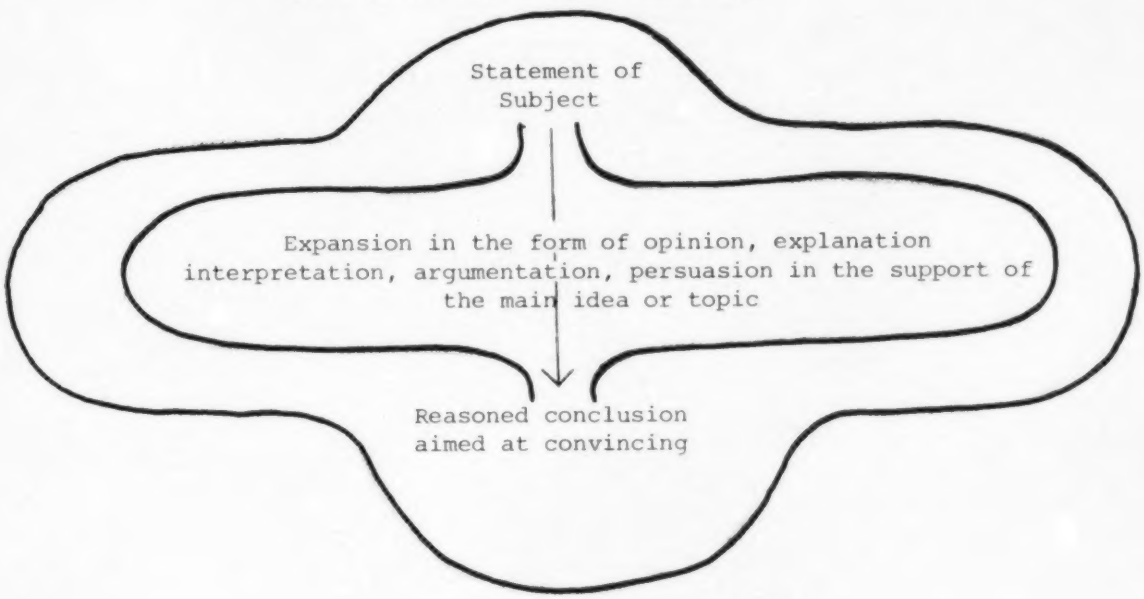
Topic Sentence: The Reminder needs student and organization support to fund and pave the parking lot for students.

(Supporting arguements)

1. The lot serves all students with cars and students who ride with them.
2. Funds will not be forthcoming from School District to pave the lot. (Mention costs and time schedule - possibility to paver part of lot)
3. During wet weather, Bulldog Lake is formed outside the cafeteria.
4. Mud is carried into school and home in the cars.
5. This is one project that will really benefit the student.

Concluding paragraph: The student parking lot is a service to the student. The cost of paving the lot is high, but can be minimal with student help. If all users donate help in the form of time and money, the lot can be paved.

Traditional Form of the Editorial


Statement of Subject
Expansion in the form of opinion, explanation interpretation, argumentation, persuasion in the support of the main idea or topic
Reasoned conclusion aimed at convincing

Newswriting

Writing the Editorial - Part II

Review: Yesterday we discussed the purpose of the editorial and its significance to the newspaper. We also discussed the structure of the editorial and the various typed. Review these various facts before proceding further.

Today, using the outlines you have prepared, write an effective editorial on the subject you choose. (Approximately 30 minutes.)

Note -- The instructor may call on several students to read their editorials aloud.

Newswriting

Editorial Cont'd

Post Test

Referring only to the editorial you have just written and without glancing at the text or other material, answer the following questions.

1. What type of editorial have you written?
2. What characteristics make this type of editorial?
3. Does it follow the general structure of the editorial? Explain.
4. What is the purpose of your editorial?
5. How many ideas have you attempted to put across to the reader?
6. List the eight types of editorials.
7. What is an editorial liner?
8. What is its purpose?
9. How is an editorial of interpretation different from an editorial of information?
10. Why is editorial policy important to a newpaper?

NOW! Check your answers against the data - Make corrections.